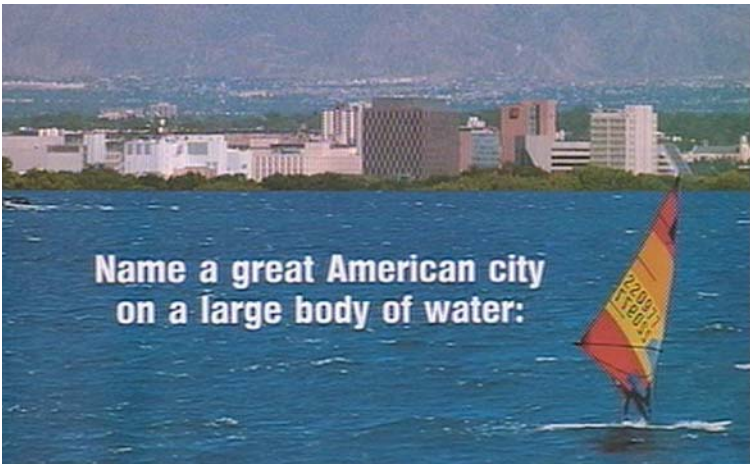


A Water Strategy for the Future

Surviving the Hype

In the 1980s, the “Lake Superior Myth” fostered boundless optimism about the Albuquerque metropolitan area’s water supply and its seemingly unlimited growth potential. Magazine ads like this one touted the area’s abundant water resources:

Our notion of a boundless lake available to the Metro area gave way to a new realization that we needed a vastly different strategy to reduce our dependence on the aquifer.

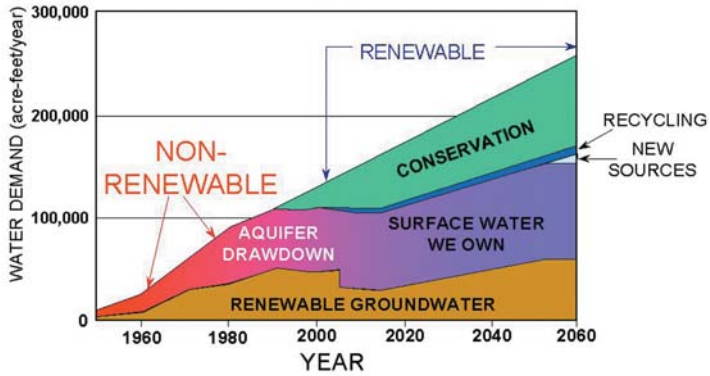


Albuquerque Living – October, 1984

Scientific studies in the late 80s revealed that our groundwater supply was much more limited and of lesser quality than we thought. We also learned that only about half of the water we were pumping from our aquifer was being replenished, and that continuous pumping at existing rates would make wide spread land surface subsidence a probability. In short, the aquifer — our sole source of water — was in danger. Something had to give!

The Weaning Process

Reducing our depletion of the aquifer requires that we replace nonrenewable groundwater with renewable supplies. Conservation is a major source of renewable water, as is recycled water. Now, we must turn to surface water as a new principal source of supply. Thanks to the foresight of community leaders 40 years ago, and our customers’ support today, San Juan-Chama water will meet that need.



How renewable and nonrenewable sources of water work together to sustain the service area’s water supply.

Saving for the Dry Days

The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority is now implementing a long-range water resource strategy that will end our sole reliance on groundwater. It will also insure that in the future, we only use the amount of aquifer water that can be replenished, enabling us to draw from it as a drought reserve in times of minimal precipitation. The strategy calls for the diversion from the Rio Grande of our San Juan-Chama water, purification of that water in a state-of-the-art treatment plant and transmission to customers in the service area. This option was selected following five years of extensive environmental evaluations and more than 10 years of ongoing public involvement. It also fulfilled the principal selection criteria of **long-term reliability and sustainability; protection of valued environmental resources; project viability; ability to support our quality of life; and financial feasibility.**

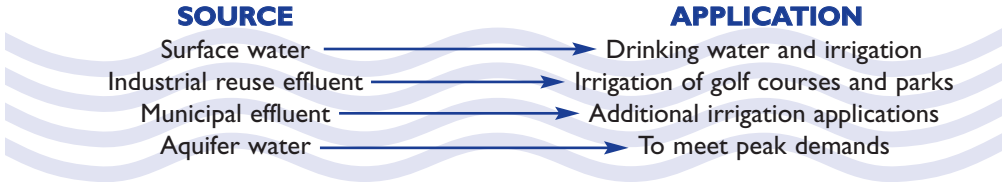
IN FUTURE SUNDAY JOURNALS:

JANUARY 22:
How the Project Works

JANUARY 29:
Construction Ahead

Putting it All Together

The cornerstone of the Authority’s strategy is **conjunctive management** of our water resources. This entails the use of diverse sources of available water to meet demand.



Innovative Reuse Programs

- **The North I-25 Industrial Recycling Project:** Water reclamation and recycling facilities reclaim industrial wastewater on a sustainable basis. *(Full operation since 2001.)*
- **Northside Non-potable Surface Water Reclamation Project:** Mixes San Juan-Chama surface water with industrial wastewater to irrigate parks, golf courses and greenbelts in the far Northeast Heights. *(Began operation in June 2003.)*
- **Southside Water Reclamation Plant Reuse Project:** Takes treated effluent water from the Southside Water Reclamation Plant and provides additional treatment to recycle the water for non-domestic uses such as turf irrigation. *(Design is complete – construction scheduled for 2006-2007.)*

These combined programs will provide up to 6,000 acre-feet of water that would otherwise have been pumped from the aquifer.

Other Major Strategy Elements

In addition to full use of our San Juan-Chama surface water, the strategy calls for:

- Full implementation of a groundwater protection program
- Support of regional water resources planning and management
- Heightened water conservation policies and practices
- Use of low quality water for irrigation, high quality for drinking purposes
- Continuing search for new water supplies
- Protection of environmental resources
- Equitable rate systems
- Public education and involvement



For more information about the San Juan-Chama Drinking Water Project, call **242-ROAD** (7623) or visit our website at **www.sjcdinkingwater.org**
TTY **1-800-659-8331**